



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH &  
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 30, 2008

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## **Art for Awareness Continues to Promote Recovery from Mental Illness**

### *Over 100 Mental Health Consumer Artists to Distribute Works at Legislative Plaza*

Nashville-- May is recognized nationwide as Mental Health Month, and in Tennessee, a special event for persons in recovery from mental illness will be held Thursday, May 1<sup>st</sup> at Legislative Plaza. Co-sponsored by the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities (TDMHDD) and the Middle Tennessee Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coalition, the third Annual Art for Awareness Day will feature the works of over 100 mental health consumer artists.

During the event, Governor Bredesen, TDMHDD Commissioner Betts, and several members of the 105<sup>th</sup> General Assembly will be presented a unique piece of art created by mental health consumers to display in their offices throughout the month of May in recognition of Mental Health Month. Several regionally acclaimed artists submitted works, including Anne Ambrose of Nashville and John L. Butts, Jr. of Clarksville.

"Being an artist, I truly appreciate the works that are displayed in my office each year for Mental Health Month," said Governor Bredesen. "I commend the work of the Middle Tennessee Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coalition and the Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities for their efforts in putting this event together and congratulate the artists on their recovery and participation."

"Art is truly a vehicle to recovery from mental illness, and I am so delighted that we have the opportunity to recognize these wonderful artists from across the state." commented TDMHDD Commissioner Virginia Trotter Betts. "I admire the courage and commitment of every artist who participates in Art for Awareness Day, and I am gratified that Governor Bredesen and many legislators are so enthusiastic and supportive of their efforts."

Art for Awareness Day is held this year in Legislative Plaza. During the event, selected consumer artists from across Tennessee will present their works, meet with Commissioner Betts and their legislators, and enjoy a reception in celebration of this annual event.

For more information on Art for Awareness day or for additional mental health information visit [www.state.tn.us/mental](http://www.state.tn.us/mental).

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